CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 25 June 1991, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Stephen J. Ledogar (United States of America)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 597th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the beginning of the presidency of the United States of America, I should like to make a brief opening statement.

Though my accession to this office is due only to accidents of timing and alphabet, it is nevertheless a high honour for me, as head of the United States delegation, to assume the presidency of this Conference. I am well aware of the importance of the job, and of its difficulties. I shall spare neither time nor effort in carrying out the tasks of this office, and I'll do my level best to keep these efforts clearly separate from my national responsibilities.

Before proceeding further, I take this opportunity to pay tribute to all of the distinguished persons who have served as President before me this year. Each has provided diligent and effective direction to the work of this body. As thee place of the United Kingdom delegation again starts its six-year circuit around this quadrangle, I would like especially to offer the congratulations and thanks of my delegation to my colleague, Ambassador Solesby of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for her outstanding work as President of the Conference during the past four weeks. We have all appreciated the intelligent and impartial manner in which she discharged her duties, as well as her strenuous efforts to advance our work - efforts which she has modestly characterized as minor adjustments to the auto-pilot controls. For all of her achievements we are profoundly grateful.

It has been pointed out to me that I come to this job at an easy time in the cycle. The committees of the Conference are in place and operating as smoothly as possible. Informal discussions on agenda items 2 and 3 are also being held on a regular basis, and yet report-writing doesn't begin until after I turn over the gavel to Ambassador Arteaga on 11 August. But, perhaps a few things can be accomplished while I'm here. On the subject of expansion of membership, I have asked Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan, and he has kindly agreed, to work with me in conducting private consultations with individual members and groups within the framework of the CD President's consultations, where all are represented. We will place special emphasis on trying to find a formula for expansion within the structural framework identified for us by previous CD Presidents this year.

I'm not partial to long introductory statements by new CD Presidents. I will allow myself just a few personal words on this occasion. The Conference on Disarmament is comprised of a group of States from all over the world whose representatives come together to consider issues and to negotiate agreements. It is the only negotiating forum where, on the basis of equality in voice, such a group of States, regardless of their military potential, their economic prowess, or their geographical size meet to come to grips with urgent security problems of our times. Each and every State can make a significant contribution to the efforts to achieve arms control and disarmament. We seek to serve the objectives of international peace and security. We do so in a world which, thankfully, has been spared the agony of a global conflict for nearly a half-century. Yet out world has, sadly enough, witnessed a

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continuation of suffering, destruction and death in numerous violent regional and internal conflicts during this period. It is a matter of great importance, therefore, that this Conference address the urgent issues on its agenda. As numerous speakers before me have already recalled, of utmost urgency is a total ban on chemical weapons.

As you know, at the beginning of this session the United States set forth some new elements in the approach it wishes to take in pursuit of a chemical weapons ban. In the process we reversed two major, long-held United States positions which most of you had identified as obstacles to progress. We didn't bargain for their removal; President Bush swept them away unconditionally. His purpose was to strengthen the prospects for a successful and speedy conclusion of a chemical weapons convention. In the weeks that followed I've sensed a new spirit of optimism and challenge in this body. We do have a very large task ahead of us, but with the will to succeed we will succeed. The chemical weapons convention will be concluded in 1992 and we will proceed to destroy these terrible weapons which threaten all mankind.

I believe we can help make our world a better place. Let us, then, continue our work in a new spirit, with a willingness to listen to, and to learn from, each other, and with a commitment to nothing less than success.

Finally, I would like to express my greetings to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ambassador Miljan Komatina, to Ambassador Vicente Berasategui, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference, and to members of the President's bureau. And I thank them in advance for the invaluable assistance I know we will receive from them.

That concludes my statement. I have on my list of speakers today the representatives of Spain and Canada. I would now like to give the floor to the representative of Spain, Ambassador Pérez-Villanueva.

Mr. PEREZ-VILLANUEVA (Spain) (translated from Spanish): It is a real honour and a pleasure for me to meet Ambassador Ledogar once again as President of this Conference after having had an opportunity personally to witness his professional skill and negotiating ability in Vienna some time ago when he and I participated in the conventional disarmament talks that were then just beginning and would later, as you all know, become crystallized in the agreement on conventional forces in Europe. Allow me therefore, as I begin my statement, to congratulate you and offer you my delegation's best wishes at the beginning of your term in the very important post it falls to you to occupy at a particularly interesting and intensely active time in the life of the Conference on Disarmament. I am sure that during your term as President, benefiting from your drive and guidance, pursuing the path taken by your immediate and illustrious predecessors, Ambassador Solesby and Ambassador Batsanov, this forum will make definite progress on the many outstanding questions in each of the committees, and especially the committee dealing with chemical weapons. I followed with great attention your very interesting statements on the inauguration of your presidency, and I think

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that your remarks on beginning your term are highly appropriate for tackling the problem of expanding the membership of the Conference. I will refer to them later. Thank you, therefore, to you and Ambassador Kamal.

We were talking about a particularly interesting period in the Conference on Disarmament and in the international context in which we are operating. There are events, and changes, taking place in the international scene today that for most part give us hope and in any event are of great interest. On 29 May of this year, the President of the United States announced a series of proposals for controlling the spread of nuclear, bacteriological and chemical weapons in the Middle East, proposals that you yourself, Mr. President, presented in this room. The initiative seeks to curb the proliferation of missiles and the destabilizing conventional arms race in that region of the world. Spain welcomes this United States initiative, through which an attempt might be made to bring military arsenals into line with the real defensive requirements of States in a particularly sensitive region. More recently, the President of France also proposed a global arms control plan while announcing his country's decision of principle to accede to the NPT. Spain applauds this decision, which will most certainly help to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and will undoubtedly set an example for other countries that have yet to join. The measures proposed by France and presented to this Conference recently by Ambassador Errera are very much in line with the Spanish position, especially in so far as their underlying philosophy is concerned (the need to promote regional and global stability through arms control and non-proliferation) as well as the instruments it suggests (universalization of the NPT and the MTCR, speeding up of the CW negotiations in Geneva, etc.). Spain believes, Mr. President, that your country's initiative as well as that of France are particularly timely as the Gulf crisis has dramatically highlighted the consequences of excessive arms accumulation in an especially unstable region. Specifically with regard to the expectations surrounding the Conference on Disarmament, we welcome with special satisfaction the initiative you recently presented on behalf of President Bush substantially modifying the United States position on certain outstanding obstacles in the chemical weapons Committee. This change in your country's negotiating position is most gratifying and will undoubtedly give a substantial stimulus to the negotiating process towards a convention.

The situation in the Conference on Disarmament in the short and medium term gives urgency to the task of reflecting on its immediate future - a task that has already been tackled by some delegations in this plenary, and one in which my delegation would now like to join, thus playing a part in harnessing the momentum given to this forum by the expected conclusion within the next 12 months of a convention eliminating an entire category of weapons. That success, which will certainly be achieved, should pave the way towards a greater and better use of the resources of this Conference and the institution in itself as the international community's sole forum for disarmament negotiations.

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We are not lacking in subjects that could be used to update our agenda, and specifically it might be useful for this assembly to benefit from the experience that some of the countries participating in it as full members or simple observers have acquired in, for example, security-building and confidence-building measures, or regional disarmament. In spite of recent fierce war crises, the future gives grounds for hope, and we think that the necessary conditions exist for the international community to take the right path towards better coexistence and the replacement of confrontation by cooperation. In this favourable climate I am certain that together we will be able to forge a future using our Conference on Disarmament in a way that will enable everyone to benefit fully. Mr. President, you may count on the support and cooperation of my delegation at all times and as far as we are able.

For several years now the participating countries, be they full members or observers in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, have been staging trials applying the rules that the chemical weapons convention will soon lay down for the different types of inspection it is likely to establish. The carrying out of trial inspections has become a praiseworthy and particularly intensive tradition in the last few years. These national trial inspections have several aims, generally seeking to check the feasibility of the inspection provisions in the draft text of the convention, and at the same time to determine the degree of preparedness and awareness of governments as well as private chemical industry and the armed forces with regard to the forthcoming application of the convention on the total prohibition of the production, development, use and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

Spain, wishing, in keeping with government policy in this area, to contribute actively to the attainment of an effective and verifiable convention, has carried out a national trial inspection, in the form of a routine inspection, the results of which appear in the report that I am pleased to present today to this Conference (CD/1082). The carrying out of the national trial inspection had a dual purpose: the immediate purpose of making a direct contribution on the part of my country to the negotiations being held in Geneva, and indirectly but no less importantly, to set in motion a mechanism for raising awareness in the public and private sector in Spain about the implications for either side that will undoubtedly stem from the entry into force of the convention.

Systematic contacts were held among the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Federation of Spanish Chemical Industries and some companies of special importance in the Spanish chemical industry before the trial inspection was carried out. The task in the first stage was to up-date information on the Spanish chemical sector and at the same time lay the foundations of what will shortly become the national authority under the convention. These initial contacts proved very useful, firstly in identifying the general features of the company to be chosen for the trial inspections, and secondly in establishing smoother relations between the authorities and the private sector in this field. In subsequent meetings the specific programme of activities was prepared and tasks were allotted to all the agencies and experts directly or indirectly involved in the operation.

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My country obtained important information as a direct result of the inspection, particularly with regard to its limits and the benefits of the inspection system. First of all, on-site inspection is an essential element for verification of a chemical weapons convention. Moreover, in this instance inspection is feasible, for as our experience has shown, it is possible to find a way to respect the company's confidentiality concerns without diminishing the effectiveness of the inspectors' task. Cooperation between the company and the inspection team is also extremely important. And lastly, it is very useful to schedule the "field" inspection in the industrial plant itself simultaneously with the inspection of the administrative and commercial machinery, which, as has been shown by experience in many other countries, in addition to Spanish experience, will be longer and more complex than the former, in most cases. Through this exercise Spain reaffirmed its belief that inspection in its different forms, as a right and as a duty, is the only element which can fully guarantee the security of the countries that are parties to the future convention. In this instance, Spain tested the system established for routine inspection of a large industrial chemical plant. My Government also plans to stage a trial inspection on request, if time allows, jointly with another country participating in this Conference. And this is my Government's intention because, considering the experience acquired through the trial routine inspection, the importance of including inspection on request or challenge inspection in our future convention with no restrictions other than purely technical ones has become even more evident. An inspection of this kind, for which there is no substitute in terms of political value, should be accepted without preconceived restrictions, conditions or limitations on the understanding that it is possible to strike a balance between the company's legitimate concerns, the unrenounceable right to secrecy in defence matters and the aim of the inspection itself, whose benefits are well worth a major effort.

I am pleased to be able to announce to you today that, as regards chemical weapons, and more specifically the 1925 Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphixiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, my Government is undertaking a detailed study on the possibility of the early withdrawal of the reservations made by my country to the text of the Protocol, to which it acceded in the summer of 1929. Spain would thus renounce the use of chemical weapons erga omnes and therefore also the right of reprisals in kind. I hope to make an official statement on this matter very soon.

On 3 April 1990 the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs in his first statement to this Conference on Disarmament in its entire history, referred, inter alia, to an aspect that is of particular concern to Spain, all the more so at this time when security arrangements in the world are changing and are being restructured. I am referring to the expansion of the membership of the Conference, on which Mr. Fernández Ordóñez said that there was no doubt that in the current international situation, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva had acquired essential importance and responsibility as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating organ in the United Nations system. In that context, he fully supported the efforts of the Conference and for that reason, and since Spain had been actively participating for years as an observer, he

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trusted that Spain would be able to become a full member as soon as possible so that it could contribute to its work more and in a more effective way. In the preceding years, the process of expansion of the number of full members of the Conference had been blocked. That had prevented the entry of countries which, like Spain, had on numerous occasions shown, as they continued to show day by day, their interest in contributing constructively and effectively to the disarmament process.

As far back as 1979 the principle that the Conference should periodically review its membership was adopted, following which the decision was taken in 1982 to actually expand the Conference in a limited fashion. The system for allocating the four seats that were approved in 1983 for expanding the membership of the Conference was established in 1986, and from then up to the present, partly because of difficulties encountered in the nomination of candidates, and partly for political reasons that are perhaps less clear, the Conference has not only retained its numerus clausus but has even lost one of its members, though admittedly for very unusual reasons. This sequence of events is well known and in recent months has frequently been referred to in this very room as the expression of growing concern over a situation that has already lasted too long.

Allow me to make a few remarks on this subject. The assumptions on the basis of which the Conference on Disarmament was established, including its different forms and titles, have radically changed. This organ is no longer called upon to promote, in an almost exclusively bilateral manner, disarmament agreements between two militarily and ideologically irreconcilable blocs with the help of a group of States not officially belonging to either of those two groups. In 1978 it was laid down in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly that what was then known as the Committee on Disarmament was to become a multilateral negotiating body, and this is the universally acknowledged status of the Conference on Disarmament, its successor since 1984. Paragraph 28 of that same document lays down that all States have the duty to contribute to and the right to participate in disarmament efforts, and, as a logical consequence, paragraph 120 enshrines the principle of regular increases in the membership of the Committee. Hence even at that time the organ of which our Conference is a direct descendant came into being with aspirations to universality, which for the moment are being frustrated by the passage of time, with no solutions being found to the expansion problem. If the situation is no longer what it was then, when the purposes and rules of procedure for this negotiating organ were established at its inception, and if the plans for expansion set forth by the General Assembly at that time have not been carried out, we must conclude that the Conference on Disarmament's mode of representation today is neither the most appropriate nor does it accurately correspond to a political scene that differs substantially from that which prevailed at the end of the 1970s. In a word, we think that all those that are here should be here, but that not all that should be here in the Conference on Disarmament are here.

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In these circumstances, and in a well-intentioned effort to overcome the difficulties caused by the deadlock on the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament for so long for those States that aspire to become full members, we have applied for all these years the formula already set out in articles 32 to 36 in section IX of the Committee's rules of procedure and in paragraphs 120 (g) and (h) of the Final Document itself. I am referring of course to participation in the negotiations by non-member States at their request. In our judgement this formula is a palliative which, though obviously useful for observer States - and Spain has been making use of it all this time thanks to the generosity of the member States - clearly is not a complete substitute for full membership status. Naturally it is very useful because it allows for inputs of points of view, experience and suggestions, as well as all kinds of observations, from outside the Conference, so to speak, on the subjects under discussion within it. But the formula is inadequate because two important factors operate in the way the Conference on Disarmament works: views relating to the actual security of States, a subject that the work in the Committee relates to almost exclusively, and the rule of decision-making by consensus, which derives from the sovereign equality of the participants. Thus, the Conference on Disarmament deals with subjects that are particularly deeply rooted in the concept of national sovereignty, on which any deal reached is complex and must be reflected upon and weighed carefully, in full knowledge of the responsibility being assumed. It is therefore only natural that decisions should be taken by consensus, implying the right of veto, which is the very right that observers lack. And in my opinion this is the feature that defines observer status. This aside, there is very little difference in the modus operandi of observers and members in everyday practice, thanks to the generous disposition of the member countries of the Conference on Disarmament. But fundamentally, because of this lack of a right of veto, because of this different and important legal status of the observer, his contributions to the Conference can only be considered secondary, strictly speaking, since it will be up to the full members to decide whether or not they will be taken into account. Thus, given that the observer cannot assert his views during the negotiations, at the time of acceding to the result of those negotiations, his national concerns, his own views, which are legitimate and worthy of respect, can only be expressed in the form of reservations to the text being signed, which - still purely within a theoretical framework - has negative repercussions for the country in question and for the entire international community. This state of affairs ultimately leads to the conclusion, in our view, that the status of what is known as an observer country is not sufficient, especially bearing in mind that the aim of negotiations is as important as ours is here and now, in this Conference and in the present historical circumstances.

The need to ensure effectiveness in the negotiations by keeping the number of full members limited is sometimes advanced as an argument in favour of maintaining the status quo and the present membership of the Conference on Disarmament at least for the time being. A conference open to everyone, giving full access to all the elements of the international community, would soon become a forum for theoretical rather than practical debate, in which the almost infinite diversity of views would cripple the consensus on concrete documents dealing with specific topics - this has often been said. In our

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opinion, the equation deliberative forum = large assembly, negotiating forum = body with limited membership is not automatically true. In fact, we think that the argument in favour of effectiveness in the negotiations through limited participation, which is generally valid, in this instance comes up against two nuances, one theoretical, the other practical. The former has to do with the reality, which I have already mentioned, of the necessary and confirmed universal character of the Conference on Disarmament. The latter has to do with a simple observation that for the moment not all the member countries of the United Nations have applied for membership in the Conference on Disarmament, even as participating non-members (though there is one well-known applicant that is still not a Member of the United Nations). The figures are truly significant. Perhaps, therefore, the difficulty the expansion would pose might not really be so great in diminishing the negotiating efficiency of an assembly that already has 39 members.

In his statement to this assembly last year, the Foreign Minister also said he was convinced that a step towards the expansion of the Conference would give a vital boost to the disarmament negotiations and help to ensure universal endorsement of any disarmament agreements that might be adopted within the Conference, that being a problem which would sooner or later have to be faced by a Conference on Disarmament restricted, as currently, to a limited number of members. As can be inferred from these words, the longed-for universal accession to these legal instruments that are taking shape in this field is a thought-provoking subject in relation to the membership of the Conference and access to it. According to all indications, and as evidenced by the wishes expressed by many delegations in this very plenary and by the progress in the negotiations, we are on the verge of reaping the fruit of a long and difficult task in concluding a chemical weapons convention, thus taking a truly historic step in the recent arms control and disarmament processes.

One of the basic components of a convention of this kind is of course accession by the widest possible number of parties, which will satisfactorily guarantee the security of all and compensate for the sacrifices made by the signatories. Therefore, it seems somewhat contradictory to wish for the widest accession to the chemical weapons convention, as is indeed logical, while at the same time limiting access to the forum in which it is negotiated. Spain has repeatedly declared its firm resolve to sign the chemical weapons convention as soon as it is open for signature, but on the other hand somewhat regrets that this is the only course fully consistent with its status as a sovereign country that my country can follow in the immediate foreseeable future since, as has been stated, its participation in the negotiating process is limited. The fact that Spain is not yet a member of the Conference on Disarmament, despite its reiterated interest over the years, does not alter the basic political decision on the chemical weapons convention or any other that may be negotiated in this field and is in keeping with Spain's security interests and those of its friends and allies. There remains, however, the possibility that this contradiction to which we referred earlier may become a deep rift in the normative system which the Conference on Disarmament intends to present to the international community, and this rift, which will never be

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exploited by Spain, will certainly be exploited by those that are already looking for its weaknesses and the means to evade the objectives of a future chemical weapons convention.

It goes without saying that if the Conference's aim is to negotiate legal instruments for the international community, neither will benefit in any way from restricted access to the institution for some members of that community, and even less so for an apparently indefinite period of time. Spain is a country, though of course not the only one, whose continued presence in the ranks of mere observers in this room and in this Conference cannot but cause a certain surprise. As a part, and a very active and staunch part, in a solid framework, of all kinds of mutual interests with like-minded countries in its geographical region and outside it, on the basis of government institutions irrevocably rooted in the democratic beliefs of an entire people, my country ought to become a full member of the Conference on Disarmament within a reasonable period of time. Spain is not a great Power either as far as defence is concerned or in industrial or economic terms. It is, however, a great European country whose position links it especially through history and geographical proximity to Africa and the Arab world in particular and through its historical and deep cultural relationship to the Americas. Hence, it does not seem easy to explain to public opinion in such a country that its political, social, economic and historical profile today is not sufficient to earn it a place among the countries that play a leading role in the United Nations' sole negotiating forum in the field of disarmament.

My delegation is aware of the difficulties that have crippled decision-making on the Conference's expansion over the years. It is also aware that the situation of profound changes and modifications in the world today, and particularly the changes in the traditional grouping of countries in terms of political affinities, constitutes indirectly an additional difficulty for my country's membership of this Conference. For that reason I would like to make a cordial and hopeful appeal to the 39 present members of this Conference to find a formula soon which can meet Spain's aspirations. In that regard, as I said at the beginning of my statement, your opening remarks, Sir, are particularly welcome.

I would also like to remind the Conference that on 1 July 1978, through the different countries' permanent missions to the United Nations in New York, my country presented its candidature for the then Committee on Disarmament. This candidature was officially restated during the general debate in the Assembly on 23 July 1982, in relation to the future Conference on Disarmament. Much more recently Spain's wish was repeated formally and explicitly by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in this very room on the aforementioned occasion and date. A few weeks ago the distinguished representative of Sweden, Ambassador Hyltenius, put forward to this plenary a proposal to guide the possible solution of the perennially postponed problem of the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament. I should like to thank Ambassador Hyltenius for his interest and efforts, and I am pleased to agree with the basic outline of his analysis. It does not seem possible to maintain the formula of an increase limited to four members, if only because of the disappearance of the German Democratic Republic, which will oblige us to fill a fifth seat; nor to

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maintain the present situation until the political groups in the Conference finish restructuring themselves. It is very likely that in the near future the General Assembly will have to take a very firm stand to clarify this entire subject and the modus operandi in this matter. But in any event, for the reasons already given, it will prove difficult to maintain the agreement in principle reached in 1983, and another figure will probably have to be set taking into account, inter alia, the fact that no expansion has been possible for such a long time.

Filling the vacancy that has arisen in the Conference on Disarmament is, we might say, inevitable. Expanding the Conference on Disarmament today by only four members, to our mind, would amount to upholding an approach decided upon eight long years ago as though nothing had changed on the international scene. It would thus be logical and practical, as well as realistic, for this assembly to begin considering soon an expansion substantially greater than the one envisaged almost a decade ago. That is the interest of my delegation and its proposal, which I commend today to the attention of this Conference on Disarmament, trusting that they will be favourably considered.

I cannot resist the temptation to refer to a curious fact, that from the observers' seats I am speaking to you in a room that was dedicated to Francisco de Vitoria, and decorated by a Spanish artist named José María Sert, with bronze doors on your right and left, Mr. President, bearing the names of Vásquez Menchaca and Suárez respectively. It seems surprising that there should not soon be a place around the table of this Conference for a country such as Spain. Thank you for your interest and your patience.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Spain for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Canada, Ambassador Shannon.

Mr. SHANNON (Canada): Mr. President, I welcome your opening statement both for its brevity and for its clarity of purpose. It reinforces my confidence that under your firm leadership, both for the remainder of this part of our session, during the subsequent break, and for the beginning of the third and final phase of our work this year, we shall find the necessary will that you referred to, as well as the flexibility and courage, to advance our work, particularly on chemical weapons. There are, of course, other important subjects with which we have to deal, as well as such issues as our programme of work in the period after 4 September; the matter of the enlargement of the CD membership; and the possibility of further improving the effectiveness of our procedures.

I will speak to certain of those subjects later in this statement but I would like to begin by offering you my delegation's full support and by expressing our thanks to your predecessors as President this year, Ambassadors Solesby, Batsanov, Hyltenius and Rasaputram, for their leadership while in office. I would also like to join in welcoming those new heads of delegation who have come to the CD since last I spoke in plenary. And I would like to take this opportunity to say a special word of both congratulations

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and farewell to our colleague Nabil El Araby. I am certain that my colleagues at our Permanent Mission in New York will enjoy and benefit from working with him as much as we have here in Geneva.

I will in due course speak to a number of subjects that relate directly to our work here at the CD. But before doing so there are some more general remarks that I wish to make, relating in particular to Canada's heightened interest in non-proliferation issues. The area of arms control is one where the lessons of the recent war in the Persian Gulf are most relevant. The aggression perpetrated against Kuwait by Iraq clearly demonstrated to all of us the dangers to the maintenance of international peace and security posed by excessive accumulations of conventional weapons. Moreover, Iraq's threats to resort to the use of chemical weapons highlighted the urgent need for the international community to mobilize political will to address the proliferation both of weapons of mass destruction and of their delivery systems.

In response to these problems, Prime Minister Mulroney, in February, launched an initiative designed to foster progress on some of the most pressing security issues of our time. This initiative stressed the need for political impetus to achieve early progress in the various arms control disarmament negotiations and other efforts that were then already under way to address proliferation issues. The Prime Minister also outlined specific measures that Canada itself would pursue, in the appropriate forums, to stengthen international non-proliferation régimes. At the political level, Canada is now therefore taking action to ensure that arms control and proliferation are given consideration at all appropriate high-level meetings in which we participate.

The first of these meetings was the recent General Assembly of the Organization of American States, at which Canada introduced a resolution entitled "Cooperation for security in the hemisphere. Curbing the proliferation of instruments of war and weapons of mass destruction". This resolution, which was co-sponsored by 22 States, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Peru, was adopted by consensus. The resolution expressed strong support for international efforts to eliminate all forms of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and urged all members of the international community to exercise sensitivity in the transfer of arms and related technologies. It also requested the Permanent Council of OAS to study problems posed to international security by the proliferation of instruments of war and to examine the possibility of exchanging information on national policies governing the transfer and procurement of arms, including the establishment of a mechanism for consultations about situations where excessive arms build-ups would appear to be developing.

Earlier this month, Canada, at the ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council, jointly with its NATO allies, reiterated its commitment to the earliest possible achievement of advances in the various forums dealing with proliferation issues. Canada was also active in pursuit of this objective at last week's CSCE meeting of foreign ministers in Berlin. The results are reflected in the following paragraph summarizing the conclusions of the meeting: "In the light of the recent experience in the

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Gulf region the ministers see a need to halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction and for restraint and transparency in the transfer of conventional weapons and weapons technologies, particularly to regions of tension. This should be a priority of CSCE Governments, and ministers agreed to maintain a dialogue on these issues among CSCE countries." Canada also looks forward to exchanging views with its G-7 partners on proliferation issues at the upcoming London summit.

My Government is pleased to note the widespread interest and constructive proposals to respond to the challenges of concluding and implementing effective arms control measures that have recently been enunciated by several other Governments. We support President Busn's proposal that the five permanent members of the Security Council, who are the principal arms exporters to the Middle East, enter into discussions to establish guidelines on the restraint of conventional and other arms transfers to that region. While President Bush's proposal deals with a specific region of chronic tension and high levels of armament, Canada believes that his initiative has the potential to provide useful experience that should be of relevance in a broader context.

The plan announced earlier this month by President Mitterrand of France is also very constructive and closely parallels Canadian thinking in the area of arms control and weapons proliferation.

The programme of action that Canada is now pursuing seeks to consolidate and strengthen instruments that are already in place or which are currently under negotiation. The scope of our programme encompasses the full range of weapons of mass destruction as well as conventional arms.

Nuclear proliferation, despite the great success of the non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), remains of great concern to Canada. We regard the NPT as the best instrument currently at the international community's disposal to effectively prevent horizontal proliferation and thereby to ensure a stable international environment that, in turn, is conducive to continued nuclear disarmament on the part of the nuclear-weapon States. Thus, Canada favours universal adherence to this Treaty. We are also very pleased that the number of States party to the NPT continues to grow and we particularly welcome the recent accessions of Zambia and Tanzania, and as well the announcement by France that it too has taken the decision in principle to accede. In keeping with the great importance that Canada attaches to the NPT, we strongly support the Treaty's indefinite extension in 1995.

It is our conviction that our ongoing efforts to ensure against the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons must be accompanied by continued efforts by the nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals. Canada looks forward to the conclusion of a START agreement in the very near future and we urge the United States and the Soviet Union to follow up that treaty with further negotiations aimed at additional deep cuts in their nuclear arsenals and I would here also like to express to you, Sir, and to Ambassador Batsanov, our great appreciation for the regular debriefings on progress in the START process which you have arranged to provide to us, most recently those by Ambassadors Nazarkin and Brooks last week.

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The early conclusion of a global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable chemical weapons convention is another very high-priority Canadian arms control and disarmament objective. We believe that this objective is possible and realistic, and that some time not too late in 1992 we can together achieve it. We will spare no effort to meet that goal.

In the related area of biological and toxin weapons, a Convention is already in place that has been developed over the years to include confidence-building measures and improved consultation procedures. Canada looks forward to the third review conference of the biological and toxin weapons Convention later this year because it gives us the opportunity to build upon existing measures. In particular, we favour the review conference establishing a clear mandate and time frame for the detailed examination of a compliance regime, including fact-finding provisions, so as to strengthen further the effectiveness of this Convention.

Closely related to the issue of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is that of capability to deliver such weapons. As a founding partner of the Missile Technology Control Régime, Canada favours the enhancement of measures to ensure against the proliferation of missile technology and encourages non-partners to the MTCR to adhere to its guidelines. The area of conventional weapons, specifically the excessive accumulation of such arms, is one that has not received adequate attention in the past. Indeed, despite increasing acknowledgement of the great importance of this matter, as evidenced in a number of earlier plenary statements this session, no forum currently exists to consider the transfer of conventional arms and the possible negative consequences that might result from such transfers. In Canada's view, transparency, consultation and restraint could provide an appropriate framework to effectively address the threat of excessive conventional arms accumulations. In order to enhance confidence among States through transparency, we favour the early establishment of a voluntary information exchange system regarding arms transfers, under United Nations auspices.

For its part, Canada released this year our first "Annual report on the export of military goods from Canada". Consultation among States on apparent excessive arms build-ups can take place in a range of multilateral forums and can encourage participants to demonstrate greater sensitivity in the transfer of conventional arms. Finally, transparency and consultation should also encourage States to exercise restraint in their arms exports or acquisition and to take other appropriate measures when it is evident that excessive accumulations are occurring.

To conclude this portion of my remarks, I would like to stress that Canada believes the months ahead offer opportunities for decisive action in addressing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and excessive build-ups of conventional weapons. Canada looks forward to working closely with you and with all States to ensure that these opportunities are exploited to the fullest.

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Now let me turn briefly to some of the subjects on the current CD agenda. I have already referred briefly to the ongoing negotiations on chemical weapons. Although the task of assessing the results of this second part of the 1991 session on chemical weapons is one that must await the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee Chairman and his colleagues, it is already apparent that our work has benefited enormously from the important policy statement by President Bush last month. Canada both welcomed and applauded that statement - not only did it demonstrate a welcomed flexibility on two of the major issues before us, but, through its commitment to resolve the remaining outstanding issues and complete the convention within the next year, it provided a much-needed impetus to our negotiations.

As a direct result of that statement, major progress has been achieved in Working Group A, under Mr. Mashhadi's able guidance, in resolving uncertainties over the question of CW use. The text emerging from that Group's discussions on article I - the article that sets forth the fundamental principles of this convention - now more clearly bans the use of CW by States parties in any circumstances whatsoever, including retaliatory use, use against a non-State party, or use against any persons or places anywhere. This is a major achievement, one that we hope will serve to encourage universal adherence to the convention. In light of this, I should like to reaffirm the undertaking made by a predecessor of mine several years ago that Canada will re-examine its reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol with a view to withdrawing these reservations once the CW convention has come into effect. We call upon all other States that have not yet done so to make a similar commitment, and I welcome in that respect the important statement made this morning by the Ambassador of Spain.

Mr. President, your Government's reaffirmed commitment to the total destruction of its CW stockpile under the convention, has, we think, successfully laid to rest concerns felt by many here about the implications of the proposals contained in CD/CW/WP.303. As such, we consider that the clear and unequivocal commitment of States parties to destroy their CW stockpiles will serve as a powerful incentive for those of us who do not possess CW to adhere to the convention.

These of course are not the only areas of our work in which there have been important developments. Rather than catalogue these, however, I should like to focus on the area that we consider most vital for ensuring an effective convention, and that is the question of verification. We and others have long argued that effective verification is essential to persuading States - both CW-possessors and non-possessors - that their security concerns regarding CW can best be addressed through this convention. And in the course of these negotiations, we have been persuaded that effective verification requires two fundamental elements: a comprehensive routine system that allows on-site inspection of any facility that might have direct relevance to the convention, backed up by a strong and meaningful challenge inspection - or "inspection on request" - procedure that ensures that any doubts that one State party might harbour about the compliance of another State party can be ultimately resolved. The two are not mutually exclusive but they are mutually reinforcing. And both will be most effective if both are developed to their optimum potential.

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We therefore find it very encouraging that the discussions this session on a comprehensive, integrated verification system under article VI have been so constructive. In large measure, this has been due to the sensitive leadership shown by Mr. Gizowski, but all participants in the Working Group deserve credit for their willingness to explore seriously the best means of achieving an effective régime for article VI. We have every confidence that if we continue this approach we will ultimately succeed in devising a system that is of maximum effectiveness at optimum cost-effectiveness. Similarly, we hope that our future discussions on article XI verification will be equally constructive and positive.

I said that I did not want to catalogue the achievements of this second part of the 1991 session and I shall not. But I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the achievements being made in Working Group C, under the leadership of Mr. Perugini, ably assisted by his amicus curiae, Professor Ronzitti, on a number of difficult legal and institutional issues. Canada particularly appreciates the progress achieved to date in resolving an issue of considerable importance to us, and that is "jurisdiction and control". If this issue can ultimately be settled along the lines of the present discussions, then Canada will have markedly greater confidence in its ability to honour fully all of its obligations under the convention.

Some observers not participating in our negotiations might wonder why we are paying such close attention to issues such as "jurisdiction and control", but we here are all aware that the details can be devilishly difficult. None more so, perhaps, than those confronting our two "Friends of the Chair" on technical issues, Messrs. Meerburg and Canonne. May I thus take this opportunity to thank them both for their patient efforts to lead us through the technical thickets of the schedules and guidelines and the problem of how to define "capability"?

I need not remind you that a further major element in President Bush's statement last month was the call to engage in continuous negotiations here until the outstanding issues have been resolved. Canada supports this call, we welcome the CD's decision to radically reduce the July break, and we are prepared to endorse further radical adjustments in our schedule in the forthcoming months to realize our goal. We have some tough decisions still ahead of us on verification but an effective CW convention now is within our grasp. With a relatively modest additional sacrifice of our time and energy, we should be able to complete our negotiations in the next few months.

Last year, I had the honour to be appointed Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on outer space. It was a difficult task. We are very pleased that this year, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, the Ad Hoc Committee has begun to focus in greater detail on questions of terminology and definition. It has always been Canada's view that we can only achieve progress on this item if we have first been able to agree on the meaning of certain of the basic concepts involved. Two of my predecessors as Canadian Ambassador here had earlier addressed this issue in this forum and I am delighted now to be able to report to them that,

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however informally, the Committee is tackling the question of terminology and definitions through a friend of the Chair, Mr. Monkton of the United Kingdom delegation.

Canada is one among those countries which, without wanting to confuse the two distinct mandates of this Conference and of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, believe that there may be areas of complementarity in which each can learn from the other. The question of establishing an agreed terminology and definitions is one such area, as has been pointed out by the friend of the Chair who is coordinating this particular subject, and I wish him well. I am also pleased that another friend of the Chair will be exploring the feasibility of ensuring increased transparency in the use of space, as a first step toward confidence-building measures. I want to take this opportunity to welcome the Soviet working paper, tabled as document CD/OS/WP.45, which we consider to be a useful compendium of existing confidence-building proposals and which we hope may help us to focus on the most promising avenues which should be followed in this area. Canada's interest in the peaceful use of space remains very high. Many of you will be aware that in October 1991 we will host a meeting of the International Astronomical Federation in Montreal and that, immediately before the IAF meeting, there will be a workshop for developing countries on space, co-sponsored by Canada, the United Nations and IAF.

On another subject, this year, Canada, in the person of my colleague Ron Robertson, has been honoured with the responsibility of chairing the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons. Together with the two coordinators of tracks A and B, Mr. Omene and Mr. Dimitrov, he is actively working further to refine the draft texts in order to advance progress on both tracks. I believe that this process is going quite well, particularly with respect to track A where one of the only really major issues still to be resolved is that of scope and definition of a radiological weapon. The older alternative language texts on these points have been extensively analysed and reviewed and interesting new proposals designed to resolve the issue have been put forward. If the members of the Ad Hoc Committee can agree on some form of language which will successfully exclude from the purview of the draft treaty nuclear weapons as such, then a major hurdle will have been overcome. Work on track "B" is also progressing but the subject under consideration, a prohibition or restriction of attacks on nuclear facilities, is both more complex and more contentious.

Before I conclude, let me say a few words about a nuclear test-ban treaty. Canada is a strong supporter of the objective of a comprehensive test-ban treaty and we have been active in advancing this goal here and at the United Nations General Assembly, in the First Committee. We recognize that conditions are not yet ripe for the conclusion of a CTBT. None the less, we believe that much valuable work can be done in this forum that will contribute to the eventual realization of this goal. Furthermore, we believe that bilateral negotiations on nuclear testing between the United States and the USSR can conclude additional significant interim steps on the road to a CTBT that could include limitations on the yield and number of tests. We urge the United States and the USSR to pursue the negotiation and implementation of

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such interim measures. Important as the CTBT goal is, Canada is convinced that it is not in the interest of international security to link progress toward this specific objective with the extension of the NPT, as was suggested by some at the fourth review conference of that Treaty, last year.

Finally, a word about improved and effective functioning, where our colleague Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan continues to lead our discussions with great distinction. It is matter of the CD's agenda, particularly in a post-chemical-weapons-convention-negotiations phase, that we believe should be the focus of our attention. We would favour dropping or the merger of some items on which little progress has been made over many years; and we would welcome additional issues being brought in for consideration. It is clear, however, that not all CD members share this view and that at least for now we may have to settle for less substantive, more procedural changes. In that respect we welcome the recent French proposals for dealing more efficiently with applications from non-member States wishing to participate in our work and recommend that we adopt them.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Canada for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I have no other delegation listed to address the plenary. Does any other member wish to take the floor at this stage? I see none.

May I recall that, immediately after this plenary meeting, there will be an informal open-ended consultation on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference, in this conference room with full services?

I have no other business for today and intend now to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held two days from now, on Thursday, 27 June, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.